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Social Progress

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The Prophetic Pulpit

Social Progress

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From This Vantage Point

A PART of our responsibility in SOCIAL PROGRESS is to report what the churches are saying and doing about public affairs.

The editors invited some twenty-five ministers to submit sermons for possible publication. They expected to hear from about half of them. The response was nearly 100 per cent, so we suffer from an embarrassment of riches. The seven sermons selected were not necessarily the best of the many we received. For a variety of reasons—length, "preachability" as over against readability, the publisher's deadline, appropriateness of subject matter—many really excellent sermons had to be put aside.

It may be noted that the sermons here consist for the most part of solid theological and Biblical discourses. It is our feeling that they are fairly representative of the kind of preaching heard in Protestant churches across the country.

We have enough good material for one or two more sermon-issues of SOCIAL PROGRESS. What do our readers think about our using this kind of material in the magazine?

The Smooth-tailed Thrust

We are grateful to Tom Arthur, of Greenfield, Indiana, for the clergybirds. They are caricatures not of persons but of clerical habits or postures of which all of us are guilty now and then.

By JOHN R. BODO
San Francisco Seminary
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RIOT AT EPHESUS

Acts 19: 21-41

THE riot was over. The wise words of the town clerk had proved effective. The crowd dispersed. To the rank and file of the silversmiths as well as to the members of the other guilds of craftsmen and businessmen, Jesus Christ remained an obscure and vaguely menacing person. They had been reassured but not enlightened. No one had risen to challenge their religious and economic system in his name. Paul had been prevented from attending. His two helpers, Gaius and Aristarchus, had not been given a chance to state their case. Now everyone was going home, perhaps a trifle uneasy but ready to forget the whole thing. The next item on the agenda was business as usual.

But there was one man in that crowd who could not forget. His name did not get into the Bible, but he was there. We may call him Joe—Joe of Ephesus. He was a silversmith of solid reputation and a good businessman. He had been quite successful and was now able to take on personally only the most interesting orders while letting his contractors and subcontractors attend to the routine work. He was a member in good standing of the guild, dependable, respected by his fellows.

Joe had heard Demetrius, but he had not joined the crowd in the shouting, because, earlier that week, something had happened to him. He had attended a meeting of the Christians and listened to the story of Jesus of Nazareth as presented by Paul. He had heard the gospel—the good news of God's Kingdom—and his heart had responded. He was more than half ready to accept Christ as his master. But now he wondered. He wondered what this would mean to him—as a silversmith.

The Economics of Faith

Joe was a realist. He did not fail to grasp the obvious truth of De-

metrius' opening words "Men, you know that from this business we have our wealth."

The great temple of Artemis at Ephesus was one of the Seven Wonders of the World. According to tradition, gold instead of mortar had been used to join together the marble blocks of the giant octagonal structure which covered over an acre and a half of ground. Silver, the most precious metal next to gold, was just as widely used. The silversmiths of Ephesus had done well at the erection of the temple and had been doing very well ever since. Thanks to the tourist trade, the demand for silver statuettes of the goddess was insatiable. Anything that threatened the cult of Artemis automatically threatened the livelihood of hundreds of silversmiths as well as of thousands of other workers in related trades and crafts. To this extent, Demetrius was right.

The Patriotism of Faith

But Joe mused on, Demetrius had not been content to point out the obvious economic implications of the gospel at Ephesus. He had touched his fellow guild members quickly on this most sensitive point but had moved on at once to loftier considerations. "There is danger," he said, "not only that this trade of ours may come into disrepute but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis may count for nothing, and that she may even be deposed from her magnificence, she whom all Asia and the world worship."

Joe was not well versed in world history, but he had intuition. He sensed that this was probably not the first time, nor the last, that the sanctions of patriotism and religion were being invoked on behalf of economic vested interests. He half admired Demetrius for his subtle switch from the real, down-to-earth reason for his opposition to the gospel to this noble, flag-waving defense of the great goddess Artemis, private deity of the Ephesians, to whom worshipers from all over the world paid homage—directly into the pockets of the businessmen and tradesmen of Ephesus!

Joe did not realize at the time his heart consented to the claims of Jesus of Nazareth that he was going to run such formidable risks. Religious nonconformity was one thing. Being accused of un-Ephesian activities was something else. But being classified as a religiously and politically suspect person was almost too much to face.

For Demetrius and the guild of silversmiths had considerable power over their members. If Joe incurred their wrath, he might be warned first —then boycotted, so that his profits would fall off—then squeezed out of business altogether. There might also be "accidents" to himself or to his employees, and social ostracism as painful as physical violence. Clearly, if Joe knew what was good for him and for his business, he would not worry too much about relating his faith in Jesus Christ to the practice of his trade.

Faith and the Family Man

If Joe had been a bachelor, his dilemma might not have been as acute. At least he would have had only himself to consider. A man is more likely to make a costly decision on moral grounds if he is risking only his own neck. But Joe was a

family man. He had a wife and three children who depended on him. He had also recently moved from downtown Ephesus to one of the rather fashionable suburbs, because his wife and children deserved a healthier environment than the little apartment behind the workshop. What with mortgage payments and the expense of additional and more elegant furniture Joe could ill afford to take so great a risk as standing up for Christian principle might entail. His responsibility to his wife and children suggested extreme caution.

Faith and Unemployment

Then too, Joe was a responsible employer. He estimated that if he were forced out of business for taking a bold Christian stand on this matter of idolatry and profit, his employees might lose their jobs too. Granted that they were competent workers who could probably get other jobs, the question remained whether, having been associated with a religiously and politically tainted character, they might not have a very hard time finding employment. Joe did not know the Greek phrase for "guilt by association," but he was quite aware of the reality. He guessed that his younger and more skillful employees would probably be forgiven and hired, but he was doubtful about the chances of his older workers for whom changing jobs might be difficult even without any added complications.

The Tyranny of Faith

Joe was deadlocked. He could go neither forward nor backward. It seemed impossible for him to pretend that nothing had happened to him earlier that week—that the story of Jesus of Nazareth was just a beautiful, wishful tale—or that the Lord, while perhaps risen and alive, was not really concerned with "hard economic facts." He knew, even at this kindergarten stage of his experience, that Jesus cannot be kept out of any part of a man's life—that nothing is insignificant or morally neutral in his sight—and that all economic and social activities are subject to his closest and most revealing scrutiny. Joe knew that the most tempting alternative—going back to business as usual—was really no alternative at all, because, having once seen the truth—God's down-to-earth truth in Jesus Christ—he could never again live happily with the accepted set of lies.

No Escape

The only other alternative was to quit. Joe thought that perhaps he could ease out of the business by cutting down on the production of silver goddesses and developing a new line of silver tableware or some other noncontroversial product; or else try to make a slow, painful switch to some other totally different occupation. But even this alternative proved unacceptable to his new standards as a disciple of Jesus Christ. He realized that removing himself from an immoral system would do him little good in the eyes of God if he left the system itself unchallenged.

It was the system that had to go—the vicious idolatry with all its phony patriotic and religious sanctions—and there was no one outside the system who could more effectively challenge it in the name of Jesus Christ than an insider—in other words, Joe.

"Follow . . . Stay . . . Fight"

This discovery marked a new beginning for Joe. As soon as he found out that he was committed to follow his master, not by leaving behind the vexing and dangerous implications of his new faith, but by going right back to his workshop, to his guild, to his service club, Joe felt relieved —immensely relieved. At least he was not going to run away. With Christ's help, he was going to try to introduce into the immoral economics of his occupation the moral power of his master's life and death. For the first time, Joe felt a sense of vocation, not as a Christian-in-general, but as a Christian who was a businessman, a Christian who was a craftsman. For Joe of Ephesus, the "Follow me!" of Jesus meant "Stay where you are and fight!"

The Church in the "System"

A second discovery followed at once. At the meeting of the Christians on the riverbank at the outskirts of town, Joe had noticed some familiar faces. He had not been the only silversmith there. There were at least two others—lesser men in the guild who were undoubtedly worried about having been seen by him—men who right now were probably going through the same pangs of conscience and who would look to him for reassurance and leadership if only he would show his colors to them and take them into his confidence.

What was it the Master had said, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them"? Perhaps by seeking out these two fellow silversmiths and sharing his fears and hopes with them, they might be led to discover others. Perhaps there were dozens of craftsmen and businessmen caught in the "system" of profitable idol-making, longing for release from their captivity, ready to face the cost in the name of the Master who would claim their whole life—religious, social, economic—until the entire city of Ephesus felt the impact, the extraordinary impact, which a mere handful of transformed men can make upon a sluggish stagnant majority.

Freedom from Fear

And here began Joe's greatest discovery. He realized that all his life he had been a prisoner of fear—not of any concrete fear but of a vague, diffuse fear—fear of what people might say or think if he permitted himself just one unorthodox, unconventional move. For the sake of his business—for the sake of his good standing in the guild and the club—he had allowed himself to become

Hodge's Fumblenote-nesting

less than himself, a look-alike man leading a look-alike life. Always he had been with the majority, a chip off the huge dull block of Ephesian respectability, prosperous and worried, gregarious and lonely, successful and futile. But now he saw a new horizon.

Joe of Ephesus had no clear-cut plan. He was just at the beginning of his pilgrimage, but he was equipped with the essentials: a heart committed to Christ, a deep sense of vocation about making his witness as a silversmith in the face of all the assembled forces of Ephesian money-religion and money-patriotism. For the first time in his life, Joe was not paralyzed by statistics, forecasts, polls, and graphs. Now he knew that when justice and truth are at stake, one man—or two or three—and Christ, are a majority!

The End of the Beginning

Brave words, are they not? I wish I knew the end of the story. I wish I could assure you that Joe won his fight without harm to himself or his wife and children, that his business, after a few jolts, was reorganized and flourished more than ever, and that the whole city of Ephesus, purged of the goddess Artemis and all her evil brood, lived happily ever after. The plain truth is that I do not know. Artemis and the system that fed upon her cult vanished, to be sure; but so did Joe. How big a part he played in the downfall of the system, I do not know. It may well be that he barely made a dent before the system caught up with him and crucified him. But what of it? If a cross was good enough for Jesus of Nazareth, should it not be good enough for Joe of Ephesus?

Work, Wait, Watch, and Hope

By FRANK C. MARTICK
First Presbyterian Church, Mankato, Minnesota

Matthew 13: 24-30

IT MAY be shocking, but evidently Jesus taught that the crisis, the culmination, the end time of evil is always both present and future, and that between these times we must learn to coexist with it. The parable of the tares implies this.

Like life itself, the issue is never simple. The tares do not grow in one field all by themselves and the grain in another field all by itself. Neither grain in the field nor people in life grow this way. Good and evil—God and the devil—if you will, are not segregated. All are mixed together in the world and grow side by side to a frightening maturity, so that sometimes the mix-up is so great that good appears evil and evil appears good. Consequently, says Jesus, this is not only a present crisis about which you must make a decision. It is also a future crisis that will grow to a culmination. In between, you have to coexist.

The Present Crisis

We are confronted today with the many crises of personal and social life. We have to make decisions as to how to handle them. Secretary Herter must do it as he negotiates on our behalf with the Communist bloc. But he well knows that crisis will follow crisis for the foreseeable future. In our story, the devil is pictured as sowing the tares at night as a kind of nasty trick he delighted in playing on mankind. The tares have a force here of more than ordinary weeds. They assume a virulence like Canadian thistles that fight for their share of the soil's nourishment. They are active and aggressive, and if the grain does not fill in the bare spots in the soil, or if the grain does not grow with vigor, they will take over. The parallel is obvious. Evil usually makes a sneak attack. Its nature is not to fight in the open—the daytime. But it is virulent in its power,

and tenacious in its hold on the soil of life. If someone could have stopped the devil's sneak attack at night, the crisis might not have occurred, but no one did. Now it must be dealt with. The "moment to decide" is upon us. This is why our forefathers kept saying over and over again, "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

When we discover that the tare situation has arisen in our personal

The Gat-fingered Grouse

and corporate life we are immediately confronted with a decision as to what we must do. It is at this moment that the future of a family, a community, a nation or of mankind is at stake, and the quality of the decisions is of terrifying importance. Rash, thoughtless, superficial action can issue, says Jesus, not merely in stopping the growth of the tares, but in the destruction of the whole wheat crop. This is why the talk of preventative war is not only inhumane, but self-destructive. If we did not succeed in destroying half the earth and polluting the rest of it, we would destroy all that is good and holy in ourselves by so wanton and cold-blooded a massacre. The advocates of these quick ways to end the international crisis fit perfectly Jesus' description of those who wanted to wade into the field and dig up the tares, thus destroying the grain too.

Here is a Christian injunction to careful and painful appraisal and analysis. It was a shock to Jesus' disciples, and it is a shock for all shallow self-righteousness within the church today. But the decision as to what we shall do in the crisis of discovering evil is perhaps the most important decision we have to make.

But the End Time

The future will also have its own consummation. History does not move without purpose. History is not without meaning. Things do not go willy-nilly in a world whose God rules, where he is sovereign.

"In the last days it shall come to pass I will gather the nations before me." There is the fearsome separation of the sheep from the goats. One of the great themes of the Scriptures is the end, the fulfillment. There is a time of justice coming on the earth. The curtain falls on the final act. In that day the tares are finally gathered up and burned—destroyed. The wheat is put in the granary.

For the tares the day of harvest is supposed to be a triumphant day because the tares have come to fruition; nothing has harmed them. God's sunshine and rain have cared for them as they did the wheat, and the tares have prospered, so that looking at them robbing the wheat of

its nourishment day after summer day makes you angry, and you feel so helpless.

Yet how discouraging for the tares, in the very day that they have reached maturity—in *that moment* —the heavens cave in and they are destroyed. It is hard to watch, but the end has more justice in it than would an earlier end that was forced by blundering hands.

Do we see what this also does for *us now!* It saves us from absolutizing what is really a passing, temporary, moral position. It keeps us from getting caught up in some utopian movement and saying—if you'll just get everyone to unite with us, the millennium will come and the evil days will end. This has not proved to be true with the co-operative movement or political idealism or trade unionism or patriotism or democracy. When anything is made absolute and takes the place of the hope we have only in the Kingdom of God we have an idol on our hands. Here is precisely the root of the fanatical, blind power of communism. A passing theory has become an absolute gospel. And much contemporary idealism would root up the wheat along with the tares. Such immature and overzealous action is not only theologically ignorant of "God's good time," but it is pragmatically dangerous.

In the Meantime

In the meantime, however, we have a dangerous and difficult time of waiting, watching and tending the wheat and tares together, encouraging the wheat to grow stronger and keeping rust from taking it or tare pollen from polluting it. But this we must do. We must live in ambiguous coexistence with the "enemy," whether it be "corruption" or "communism." To destroy and cripple all the good in the labor movement would be to root up the wheat to get the tares, as *some* people would do now. This is why exactly the right kind of labor bill ought to be passed and not a law punitive of law-abiding unions. And that is why we have no choice except to live in coexistence with Russia and with Red China. A nuclear war now would probably not only end Russia and China, but it would end democracy, and the chaos resulting would be the most fertile ground in which communism or something worse would sprout. Tares are hardy and seem to spring up where more cultivated grain can't grow.

Who Is the Judge?

But it isn't only that there is hope in the future end time. In the first place we are not really qualified to define true tares. They may turn out to be less virulent than we thought. It could even be that some stalks that we thought were tares turn out to be more harmless weeds, and a few may turn out to be a hybrid variety of wheat itself. God may be using the devil for his own purpose. The first protests against slavery in this country were thought to be pure heresy. The protesters were not in good repute. Moreover, as plants grow they sometimes hybridize and fool even the devil. They grow up a different variety from what they were as seeds or small plants. We can at present misjudge both the variety of tares and also their crossbreeding as they grow.

So it is in our world. To utterly smash the Teamsters Union would bring injustice to thousands of innocent teamsters. To predict now what Russia and China may become in another generation is to second-guess the wisdom of God. But if we watch carefully, hedge these evils about with every possible safeguard, and encourage the growth of the wheat, then the tares may change and the harvest be something less than what we thought it would be in the strength and nature of the tares. And if not, in the end time, they will come to the predestined end of all evil, which always carries within it the seeds of its own destruction.

Finally, what of our own humility? One wonders often about a spirit that upon seeing the tares in the field is indignantly self-righteous and declares that they shall be rooted out. If all the unrighteous were to be rooted out, could *any* of us survive? Are we so terribly sure that *we* are the children of light and all others children of darkness? Are we never dubious of our election? The Pharisees were far too sure of theirs and believed fervently that everyone else was a tare, to be uprooted, Jesus included. And Jesus pointed out that the judgment of God might reverse the decision. "The last shall be first, and the first shall be last."

So it is in our time. It ill becomes business, which had the greatest year for embezzlements at the executive level in 1957, to make it appear that management is moral and all unions are immoral. Or for Western leaders to stand at the edge of the ocean and lecture with pointed finger the leaders of other countries on *their* position, implying that we are moral, and they are not. Where is our humility? It would be well to let the tares and wheat grow together until God's judgment falls, meanwhile bending our efforts to control the weeds and strengthen the wheat so that it might even choke out some of them by its superior quality and strength.

Work, Wait, and Hope

Notice that Jesus did not say that because the tares were allowed to grow along with the wheat that he or his disciples approved of the tares or the work of the devil. This parable implies that we dare not self-righteously wreck society to get them out. It means that we trust the sovereignty of God to deal with them and us. In God's providence there is always the immediate crisis to be dealt with wisely, painfully, and carefully, and with maturity. But there is the hope also that if we do this, God will let his justice fall, "in his good time."

GOD'S PEACE and MAN'S PIECES

By ROGER A. COWAN
Central Presbyterian Church, Massillon, Ohio

***For he is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility.*—Ephesians 2: 14.**

What's wrong with our church? I had been here * about a month when an elder asked the question. It was a serious question, and asked out of concern. In two and a half years, it has been asked me a hundred times.

Today I'm going to tell you. But first let me tell you what it is not.

Some have thought our problem is *pastoral work.* We needed more calling on the sick and aged. Surely, if the minister visits, we will all be happy. We will have peace. So I have called. But there is no peace.

Some have thought we lack *evangelism.* For thirty years, while our town was growing, our church lost members, so that we had fewer members in 1956 than in 1926. We organized an evangelism committee, worked up lists of new members, and last year received more people than in any of the last thirty years. But there is no peace.

Some have thought our problem is *fellowship.* Our people are scattered out. They have been called a "cold" church. We must bring them together more often. So we rotated ushers each quarter, put a couple of greeters at the door, purchased a guest book. We divided our church into geographic zones, brought people together in the homes of their neighbors. We manufactured fellowship. But there is no peace.

Some have thought our difficulty is in *organization.* A handful of people did all the work. The great majority never held an office. So we established committees and worked out a zone plan. And still, there is no peace.

May I offer an analysis? You can call until you're blue in the face; you can have fellowship until you're tired of one another; you can bring in members until your building is packed; you can organize until at night you dream of wheels within

* An earlier pastorate. This sermon was preached within a situation fraught with racial tension.

wheels—and you still will not have peace. This is not to say these projects and goals aren't worthy or needed. They are. But none of them alone, nor all of them together, can answer the question we started with —what's wrong with our church?

Sadly, we begin to rail at one another. It's the new people who have ruined our church. If we just don't let them take over, if we buck the things they try, show them who's boss, we will have peace. Or, it's the minister's fault. If we stay away and don't contribute, he'll get the idea; we'll starve him out, and we can get a new minister—quieter, less controversial. Then we will have peace. Or, it's the fault of the session. If they'd just get things back to where they used to be, abolish all this program and this infernal appeal for activity, we'd revive the good old days and have peace. Or, it's the Presbyterian Church. If we'd just reject this radical church school material, tell those people in Philadelphia what we think of them, refuse to be ordered about and instead run our own show—then we'd have peace. On and on. Ad infinitum. *Ad nauseam.*

So, split, sore, sour, we come to the great impasse. We now reach the point of giving up, of despair. In this mood we are tempted to step back. It won't hurt very much. Just a little bit. And we have to be realistic. So already we plan—we try to adjust to decadence—if one can adjust to decadence. First, we will cut the staff. Financially, we can't afford to keep it. Then we will cut benevolent giving —we never used to be so concerned about others. Then perhaps we can settle back and—die?

But, alas, we should have learned. We can work on the lowest common denominator, and we will not have peace. We can cut the staff, abolish our program, slice the budget, and we will not have peace. We can whisper, shout, apologize, argue, squirm, toss, lose sleep, mutter prayers for deliverance, resign, change churches, promise to try harder—and still we won't have peace. Why? Why can't we manipulate peace by majority vote, popular opinion, public pressure? Why can't we make peace with our smartness, our coyness, our armchair advice, our behind the scenes planning? Why is it that no matter what we do, all we get are fragments—pieces but no peace? Why can't we appease our way to peace?

Look at the New Testament. What makes it fairly shout with joy? Is it the early Christians' civic prominence? They are social outcasts. Is it their popularity? Nobody can stand them. Is it their dignity, their tact? They tell off rulers to their faces. Is it their smart politicking? They have no apparent program, no blueprint. What is it then? Well, listen to what they say.

They say that the thing that brings them together, that unites them in a vibrant, dynamic life is nothing they have done at all. What then is it? It is the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. This Christ has sprung upon them like a lion, judged them from a cross and there made them see that this is the way they are—each one in his heart a murderer of God. "Christ died for the ungodly." And there, in that certain place on that one hill, they see that he takes all the evil man

can throw at him, the bite of dark words, the spray of human spit, the piercing pain of nails in hands and feet. And what does he do with it? He conquers it, shatters it, kills it, stamps it in the dust. He forgives it, he loves it, he gathers it to himself. And that Sunday, when they are shattered and saddened, remorseful and regretful, he comes upon them. Alive, alive, man alive! Christ has broken death! They now can share in that death and life; it is for *you* he died, it is *you* he forgives, it is *you* who now may live in him for eternity. This was the mighty invasion of God which shook the world and shakes it still. This is the action of God which has broken down the dividing wall of hostility that separates us from him, and from one another, and from the whole world. This is the only gospel the Christian church knows. This and this alone—is our peace.

What's wrong with our church? Simply this. We have not accepted Christ's mighty act. So we are hostile; so we despise one another in the name of Christian love; so we manuever to establish peace because we are smarter than he is. We do not need what he has done. This Calvary has no bearing on us. We can handle ourselves, thank you. We say with the poet,

> I want no Jesus Christ to think
> That he can ever die for me.

But he has! Isn't that the irony of it? And the glory? He has died for us! We can accept it or reject it. But we cannot deny it. It is done. Christ has won the victory.

What we face in our church is fragmentary religion—which is just a respectable form of self-worship. Our problem is not the race question or any other question. Our problem is blasphemy—the idea that the church is a human organization, made up of men and women who agree to be relatively moral. And it doesn't take much to be moral with your relatives! But this is not the church! It is not our volunteer organization, our mutually approved ministry of personal salvation. Emphatically, the church is not ours at all! It is God's fellowship—his work. It is he who calls us to be the church. It is God's creation—ordained by him, established by him, purposed for his glory. Always, we get what we ask for. We can play church if we want—but God won't play. We can go our own way, run our own show, and do it in Christ's name. But he won't bless it. It will not be his church. He will judge it and condemn it, divide it and destroy it. It is not his and he will not have it. We are weighed right now and found

The Ivory Hailfellow

wanting. Wanting because we have not accepted for ourselves the very basic proclamation that "Christ is our peace and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility." Do you not agree that really this is what's wrong with our church?

Christ came to a fragmentary world. His disciples were divided two against ten. But he was their peace, and so Peter became the giant of Pentecost instead of the coward of Calvary eve. Paul became the great preacher of the word instead of bitter, sulking Saul of Tarsus. They did not do anything—no credit to them. God did something—all glory to him!

You see, the gospel is that we have humanity only as we are at peace in Christ. Without him we are less than human, still animals, albeit educated, refined animals. We do not then, by attitudes and actions, pass judgment alone on this time. We pass judgment on Jesus Christ and our eternal status as children of God. Is that less important than peace at any price?

We can be made whole only by the peace of God. We are fearful of ourselves, of one another, of the future. But love casts out fear. In so far as we fear, we have not known love. For perfect love casts out fear. And perfect love comes not of our manufacturing but as a free gift through the Christ who is our peace. What we are deciding here these days is not a race question. It is a question of whether this church is an instrument of men or a fellowship of people engrafted into God. If it is of men, it will die and good riddance. If it is of God, it will receive its peace through him who loves us, who died for us, who lives and reigns now and forever.

God in Christ means not only that we are judged but that beyond the judgment we are loved. Not only that dividing walls are broken down but that reunion is established. The Christ who comes to condemn us, stoops also to lift us from the dust, set us on our feet, set us free. Free from ourselves, free from our pride, free from our hatred of one another, free from our blasphemy of God. The question is whether we love him enough to admit what we are and let him live in us. There is nothing else we can do. He alone is our peace.

By Popular Demand

By LEROY PATRICK, Bethesda
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O Lord, God . . . , let it be known this day that thou art God . . . , and that I am thy servant.—I Kings 18: 36.

THERE is a good deal of belief in God about these days. Ninety-six people out of every hundred say they believe in him. Our belief in God is like our belief in democracy: it is a good thing and we propose to support it by going out to vote—if it does not rain.

From time to time, however, a crisis arises—a President speaks about the space program—and there is an insistent clamor for decisive action. Similarly, in life's extremities, we are insistent that God act, that he prove himself to be God.

Indeed, if our belief in God is more apparent than real, if our attitude toward him is more casual than committed, it may be due to the fact that God has not shown himself to be God in any unmistakably clear fashion. He seems to maintain a detached nonchalance toward some very important issues: freedom versus enslavement in world affairs, or so simple a matter as on-the-job promotion for this loyal and eminently qualified servant. One cannot count on him.

Wanted: Action

If things go wrong sufficiently long, we are likely to attempt to *force* God's hand. We insist that he should step into the situation and prove that he has the power he is reputed to possess. Especially is this true when our reputation is in question; or when the future of the people for whom we feel responsible is at stake; or when his own prestige must be maintained. A God who cannot or will not act in behalf of his suppliants' will becomes no more than Shelley's "colossal wreck, boundless and bare" over which "the lone and level sands stretch far away." To prevent such a catastrophe, we are apt to *demand* his intervention. We know we cannot coerce God, yet we can't help trying.

"O Lord, Do Something"

Was this not Elijah's predicament? He believed in God. He was zealous for God. Things had reached such a state that he felt it was time for God to do something. And in his zeal Elijah maneuvered himself into a spot where only God could help him. He staked his reputation—indeed his very life—on a contest between God and Baal. In a very real sense, he permitted his passionate hatred of the queen and her prophets to entrap him.

It was hazardous in the extreme. Not only his life, but the people's future, he put in jeopardy. Some seven thousand had not bowed the knee to Baal, but who would dare speak out for God after the fiasco Elijah was about to perpetrate? And what of God's own prestige? Those prophets of Baal, imported by Jezebel, would be immeasurably assisted in their propaganda mission by the imminent debacle. Elijah must win a clear-cut victory. No technical knockout or draw in the contest would help him. Do you wonder, then, that he called out with more than ordinary insistence: "O Lord, let it be known this day that thou art God, and that I am thy servant."

Elijah here speaks for many a believer. We echo his cry in our extremity. "O Lord, do something." It may be a mother asking her minister to pray for her daughter who is desperately sick in an oxygen tent. It may be a group of clergy kneeling at a cathedral altar praying for the end of a strike. The burden of each petition is that God should prove that he is God and that we are on sufficiently intimate terms with him that he will hear us and show publicly that we are his servants. Elijah put God on the spot. We ourselves often do the same thing. A perfectly reasonable, human thing to do. What then, is wrong with it?

The Unmanageable God

The only thing wrong—and it is of crucial importance—is that we have not tried to discover the character of this God into whose courts we blithely go lobbying for special concessions. There are elements in his make-up that may give us pause. Consider his character.

In magnanimity he creates a man in his own image, but in sharp severity he drives this man, Adam, from the garden with a curse for disobedience. He selects a rather ordinary man, one who will not hesitate to lie to save his neck, to be Israel's founder. Why Abraham? Was there no more stalwart man available?

This God confidently delivers a people from slavery, lovingly nourishes them through their wilderness wanderings, triumphantly presents them with a homeland—and summarily exiles them for disobedience.

Later on Israel asked him to let it be known that he was God and Israel his servant, and God came in Jesus Christ.

What did Jesus Christ reveal? Some looked upon him and said, "God has let it be known that he is God." They saw that Jesus mediated to them a Spirit strong enough to conquer the demons with which they believed the air infested; a Spirit powerful enough to overcome the threat of death; a Spirit kind enough to absorb their sin into his suffering love.

But see the strangeness of God's revelation in Jesus: Others looked at the identical life, heard the same words, saw him perform mighty deeds, and said, "He is in league with Beelzebub, the prince of demons." "Show us a sign," still others asked. Tragedy stalked Jesus' footsteps. He wept because Jerusalem did not understand the revelation of God. He blazed with anger because the Pharisees *would* not. He pitied the simple sinful fold who *could* not, and through it all he made his plea for love, for the understanding heart, for deeper compassion than the scribes possessed. For his reward he received rejection: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not"; agony: "Father, all things are possible to thee; remove this cup from me"; betrayal: "Judas came and kissed him"; desertion, denial, crucifixion: "He saved others; himself he cannot save."

Do you see in all this something of the mystery in God? Does this tell you anything about his character? Dare we try to force his hand?

He did not bridge the twenty-cent gap between the union's demand and management's offer, and the strike continued.

The girl in the oxygen tent died. The growing boy went bad. The alcoholic husband continued to drink. God refused to be manipulated.

What, then? Is this the only reward for the man of faith: to worship a God who will not act, a God one dare not approach? No. There is another side to God's character.

The Man Who Staked Everything

Consider Elijah again. An exceptional man found himself facing an extraordinary situation. A determined self-willed queen was killing off the prophets of God; one hundred of them had sought miserable refuge in a cave where they subsisted on bread and water supplied by Obadiah, the faithful steward of Ahab's household. A compliant king was winking at the dastardly crimes. All around was a fickle people whose God was their belly.

Things could hardly get worse. Drastic and spectacular steps must be taken. So, Elijah decided to stake all on one throw of the dice. *He would not play it safe.* He had looked at the complex moral and religious issues. He would not dissipate his courage by circumspection.

"Gather all Israel unto me at Mt. Carmel," said he to the king, "and the prophets of Baal, see that they are there. Each of us will prepare an altar with its sacrifice, and each will call upon his God. The God who answers by fire, let him be worshiped as God."

The thing was done, and God

The Full-breasted Pomp

heard Elijah's cry. A flash of lightning consumed his sacrifice and Elijah was vindicated. True religion had a new lease on life. The people cried, "The Lord, he is God, the Lord, he is God." Elijah put God on the spot and got away with it!

The Man of Faith, Win or Lose

We cannot understand God. Though inscrutable to us, his purpose remains constant: to prepare men to claim their true sonship. This purpose may require a Jeremiah to stay with his people in their degradation, despite their refusal to heed the prophet's warning. It may give a Job some dim appreciation of how far the ways of God transcend the ways of man. It may bring Jesus through the wasteland of the soul to the calm readiness: "It is enough; the hour has come."

God's purpose is constant, even though inscrutable to us. It may be seen in the sudden shift of mind for a man trapped in ice floes or forest fire. It may be evident in the quick weaving of a spider's web across the mouth of the cave in which Scotch Covenanters are hiding so that when persecuting horsemen see the web they conclude no one has recently entered the cave, and go their way.

Man's response to God must always be a creative faith. Only the man of faith may have some dim glimpse of God's purpose. Even though he cannot understand this purpose in every situation, he must risk all, nevertheless, on God, for he knows God is in control of His world.

If that man calls the more loudly in life's extremity, it is not to coerce God. It is merely that he can do no less. When God answers, he is humble. And when God does not answer, he is hopeful. For he knows that if there were no mystery, God would not be God. And, if he understood God's every yes and no, man would not be man.

Such a man of faith is at one with God. This is his only reward and there is none greater.

By JOHN O. MELLIN
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Why Should Men Love the Church?

Isaiah, ch. 55; Luke 10: 1-11

WHAT of the "outsider" who doesn't yet know what the love of God demands of him? What of those not yet persuaded? Christians speak of a God in whom we live and move and have our being. But the outsider who lives in the hope of ultimate personal comfort, moves in the luxury of a Detroit-created womb, and whose being is in front of a television set, which promises freedom from want, pain, and strife —"You can polish your floor with absolutely no rubbing at all"—what of him? Can we polish our lives with no rub? The cross says no.

Since we are all to a certain degree outsiders, it is to this I wish to speak. My topic is from T. S. Eliot's Choruses from "The Rock," "Why should men love the Church?"

Why should men love the Church?
Why should they love her laws?
She tells them of Life and Death,
  and of all that they would forget.
She is tender where they would be hard,
  and hard where they like to be soft.
She tells them of Evil and Sin,
  and other unpleasant facts.
They constantly try to escape
From the darkness outside and within
By dreaming of systems so perfect that
  no one will need to be good.
But the man that is will shadow
The man that pretends to be.

—*From* Collected Poems 1909–1935 by T. S. Eliot, *copyright, 1936, by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc. Reprinted with their permission.*

Here the poet is attempting to distill the meaning of the gospel for the outsider, and we are all outsiders to a degree of Life and Death and Sin and Evil. The really basic questions of existence are avoided in the thought and discussion of the everyday world.

I

Why should men love the church? Because it tells them of unpleasant facts! Men should love the church for the criterion of external judgment it places upon their undirected

lives. Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr claims that *The New Yorker* is the most theologically oriented magazine in the city. Why is this? Because it pricks at our human foibles and reveals us to ourselves. Humor is judgment. Through the best humor we are exposed.

The nicest thing about *The New Yorker* is that it allows us to have our cake of self-judgment and eat it too! Where else can you find such snob offers as: "Genuine imported cashmere sweaters, sleeveless, $150; with sleeves, $200," but in *The New Yorker* itself? There is a certain lack of honesty in judgment which cannot be directed within. So we have a high-class joke book . . . and laughing is judgment, but you can't spend all of your life laughing. There comes a time when honest, judging humor leads on to reverence and action, so that the man who "pretends to be" is changed. I'm not anti *The New Yorker*, I like it. It is the sophisticate's Bible, but it doesn't supplant

Shookup's Red-eyed Weeper

the church! It is at best a halfway house to the real thing.

The church has its phonies as well, but the church carries the criterion for its own criticism in the judgment of God made through the love of Christ. And it is constantly ferreting out the false in us through our general confession. No one worried about hypocrites in the publishing business, but everyone is appalled when hypocrites appear in the church. Why? For good reason! Why should men love the church? Because it alone through the love of Christ under God exposes the man who pretends to be and calls for humble confession.

II

The poet says men should love the church because it speaks of Life and Death and all they would forget. You say: "Don't scare anybody. Mr. Outsider isn't interested in these things." It would be what George Gobel calls "dirty pool" to wave Life and Death in front of him in the interest of church affiliation. But, isn't Mr. Outsider already interested? For "Life and Death" read instead "loneliness and fear." Loneliness and fear are the emotions related to the facts of Life and Death. The church doesn't have to make people lonely and afraid. They are already!

David Riesman wrote the biography of *The Lonely Crowd* and he is no churchman. It is the story of people unable to make an honest contact with their fellows, seeking through adjustment and conformity to make some minimal saving contact. The cocktail party is the sacramental meal of the lonely crowd. Try to be an observer at one sometime. Every-

one talks. It is a giant confessional even to the extent of occasional weeping. Everyone talks, but no one listens. It is perhaps better than no sacrament at all. But the need drawing Mr. Outsider to the communion of the lonely crowd is better met in the church, if he is honest in his search.

It was Albert Camus, who had his chief character in *The Fall* say: "Thus I progressed on the surface of life, in the realm of words as it were, never in reality. I have no more friends. I have nothing but accomplices. To make up for this their number has increased; they are the whole human race." The statement of the ultimate loneliness is from the ultimately sophisticated outsider Jean Baptiste Clamance in *The Fall.*

So much for loneliness, what of death and its emotion fear?

Dr. Rollo May, psychoanalyst, at the Yale convention of The Connecticut Society of Psychiatry and Neurology, reminds us that we can't have much more sex freedom than we have. And often the freest are those most run amuck. Dr. May looks for the problem elsewhere and finds it where the Bible always found it. (Now at Yale it's called "A New Dimension in Psychiatry.") He claims that our fear is the result of the fact that we have become displaced in space. The fear of death in a meaningless universe has always been the basis of our anxiety. Now it is brought in focus for us by the hydrogen atom. Not a conscious but an unconscious anxiety and fear. How else can we describe the frantic reaction of Americans through their Congressmen (truly representatives of *all the people* as they say)? Investigations. Calls for UN control of space! What pretension! A people who could not control the 18th Amendment, off-track betting, bingo, drug traffic, now plans to control space! God, the creator, controls space. Because he has granted freedom, the only control he doesn't have is the human heart! The church doesn't have to invent fear. It's here. And Mr. Outsider has as much of it as anyone. His anxiety tells him what his mind would forget.

Honest judgment and the forgiving love of God—this is what we need. This is what Mr. Outsider needs. It is what we all need to know.

III

Now a word of transition. Someone may say, "You have asked the question, 'Why should men love the church?' but you didn't speak about the church, you spoke about the gospel of Jesus Christ revealing the grace and caring of God."

This is not the church. You are right. However, men need the church because that is the only place the gospel is kept to the fore. Imperfect church carrying a gospel too big for it . . . but who else carries it? Would you rather entrust the constant emphasis of the gospel of love to the Teamsters, to the Chamber of Commerce, to Madison Avenue, to the Government? God forbid! Men need the church because it is the only institution free to speak the gospel however falteringly. To speak of God's loving grace in the public school is illegal. Where else will Mr. Outsider find the answer that he longs for most?

One final question might be raised by the self-sufficient individual. He

may say, "The love of God is a prop I do not need." This could be called the stoic's response. Why do we love all props except the grace of God? Alcohol is a prop. An umbrella is a protection and prop. An overcoat is a prop. Who lives without props? Even eating is a prop against hunger. Why not feed on the Bread of Life? Or as Isaiah cried, "Why spend your money for [props] that which is not bread and your labor for [props] that which satisfieth not?" This is what most of us do.

Show me the man whose judgments are perfect, who is neither afraid nor lonely, who needs neither love of neighbor, or more, needs not the love and forgiveness that even a gregarious neighbor cannot give, and I will show you one to whom the church has no word to speak!

Let us turn the coin for a moment. Dr. David Roberts writes of meeting a man who said to him: "I spent twenty years trying to come to terms with my doubts. Then one day it dawned on me that I might better come to terms with my faith. Now I have passed from the agony of questions I cannot answer into the agony of answers I cannot escape. And it's a great relief."

IV

Our Lord sent out seventy disciples. He told them to go into every town and village with the message. But if they were not received, they were to shake off the dust of their shoes and move on saying: "Notwithstanding, be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." In other words the gospel must be taken to the outsiders, the dying salesmen of this world, but if they will not hear, notwithstanding the gospel has come nigh unto them. Willie Loman may not love the church, but the church is interested in Willie for God's sake and ours. This is Jesus' word to Mr. Outsider. But he had a word for the church as well.

The Seventy went out and followed the will of God in Christ. A change came over the people upon hearing the disciples' preaching, and the demons which gripped men's souls fled before the Word of God, meeting them in judgment and saving them in grace. And the disciples got very excited. They came back to Jesus ecstatic and said, "even the devils are subject unto us." Their pride was as high as their spirits. This thing works! There were pragmatists then as there are today. Jesus cautioned them: "Rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven."

Rejoice not because it works but because it is true. Rejoice not because it is yours but because this is the nature of God. This is God's word for the church. Not numbers but how it presents the gospel is what is important. Men should love the church, not for itself, God forbid, but because it is the only place that carries the gospel of redeeming grace, which translated means we can be redeemed from loneliness and fear and become graceful people again, and becoming graceful can then be graceful servants one to another. Who needs it? We all need it. Accepted by God through Christ, we can accept ourselves, and accepting ourselves we can accept our neighbor as ourselves.

By DAVID H. C. READ
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HOW NEUTRAL IS THE CHURCH?

In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land: Whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.—Isaiah 19: 24-25.

The Blessed Third

The third, the blessed third—this is one of the most attractive roles a man or woman (or a nation) can play. In fact we are always casting ourselves for it. In business affairs Jones is too rash, Smith is too cautious: I am the third, who knows how to hold the balance. In the football game John is a fanatical supporter of Yale while Bill roots nonstop for Harvard: I, having been to neither, am the blessed third who sees the finer points of the play. In the club you know how Mrs. X cannot stand Mrs. Y; when they meet you can almost see the sparks crackling across—but when I am there, the happy third, it is quite different, for I happen to like them both. In politics we all know how this fellow is much too far to the left and that one away to the right, almost out of sight. I am the blessed third—in the middle of the road.

When *we* play the role, the third, the neutral, is a very fine fellow. He is the one who is above the strife, too wise to be drawn into vulgar squabbles, too impartial to take sides, too balanced to tip over into one camp or the other. The blessed third is the man whose judgment is impartial, the woman whose tact can soothe and sweeten a clash of temperament, the counselor who prevents a marriage breaking up, the nation that refuses alignment and seeks to mediate between conflicting powers. When we are the blessed third, the word "neutral" has a noble sound.

The Cursed Third

But there is another way of looking at this third party. It is easy to be neutral in those areas where our own passions and convictions are not

engaged. But unless we are content to be human jellyfish floating aimlessly on the tides of popular opinion, we are bound, sooner or later, to find ourselves committed to a cause. To be real men and women we must form our own opinions, reach our own convictions, and, inevitably, take sides. And we choose our side because we believe that it is the right side. If we are fair-minded people we recognize that others may, with equal sincerity and conviction, take the other side. But if the question is really serious, the man we have least time for is precisely this third party: no longer the *blessed* but now the *cursed* third. He is the man who forever refuses to commit himself, the woman who agrees so heartily with everyone that no one believes she can be sincere, the interfering friend whose only contribution to a marriage tension is to unite both parties in a common detestation, the nation that quietly benefits from the blessings for which others are prepared to fight. The word "neutral" now begins to have a very different flavor. It reeks of smugness and compromise and moral cowardice.

There is, then, a neutrality to be admired and a neutrality to be detested. We all need more of the positive neutrality that avoids violent and irrational judgments and seeks to inject a calm and peaceful spirit into explosive situations. "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." But we all need much less of the negative neutrality that refuses all judgment, and dodges all decisions, the neutrality of the eternal spectator. "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word." A judge on the bench is positively neutral: he must have no prejudice in favor of one side or the other. But, having heard the evidence it is his duty to pronounce a verdict. We should be more than surprised if he were to say: "I am entirely neutral as to the rights and wrongs in this case. In fact, I am not at all sure that there is such a thing as right or wrong. Therefore, I shall suspend judgment now and forever!"

How Neutral Is the Church?

In what sense is the church neutral in the affairs of this world?

I seem to hear contradictory voices shouting at us today. One says, "Let the church keep out of all controversial questions and be entirely neutral in all the debates that are agitating the nation or the world." Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world." Another says, "Why can't the church give a lead, tell us what it stands for, and translate its faith into action?" Jesus taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come on earth." One man tells us that the church is the body of Christ and therefore a divine institution poised above the clamor of human conflict. Another replies that just because the church is the body of Christ, therefore it is thoroughly enmeshed in this world, a party in all its controversies and decisions.

What are we to think? How neutral is the church? Perhaps Isaiah himself can help us to clear our minds.

In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land: Whom the Lord of

hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.

On one level, Isaiah was dealing with a national policy decision. When he was writing, there were two major powers in the field—to the south, Egypt, a rich, cultured, slightly decadent empire that could still send powerful armies across the Middle East; to the north, Assyria, an expanding, ruthless dictatorship with an increasingly formidable military machine. If these two powers were to come into conflict, the outlook was bleak for small states such as Israel, which lay uncomfortably across the path of inevitable collision. So the major debate in that area concerned the policy to be adopted toward Egypt and Assyria. There was a pro-Egyptian party, a pro-Assyrian party, and the neutral party.

But this was Israel—not just a nation, but "the people of God." And the prophet was concerned, not with temporary alignments and adjustments, but with God's purpose for his people. The Bible deals with these concrete situations, not just as an interesting slice of ancient history, but as a part of the cosmic drama of man's redemption. This is the story of the people out of whose struggle and suffering Christ was to be born, and the church—the New Israel—to be given to the world. Therefore the prophet looked beyond the immediate problems of the day to the ultimate destiny of Israel—to be "a blessing in the midst of the land."

This is the true neutrality of the church. For the church of Jesus Christ, as the "New Israel," is not to be identified with any one nation or group of powers. The church is catholic, universal. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." There is now no "chosen people" except those who, in every nation, allow God to choose them. And this is why we rejoice here to have Christians from all parts of the world worshiping with us. This is why we sing the universal hymns and repeat the universal creed. This is why we rejoice to share, through our "World Service" budget, in the world-wide mission of the church—the "blessed third" in the midst of violence, hatreds, and nationalist passions.

The Interrupted Lostpoint

The Church—Positively Neutral

The church, then, is neutral—positively neutral—as it claims all nations in the name of Christ. It refuses to consign any people anywhere to

"outer darkness." For it believes that every nation, no matter how violently governed or morally misled, is still the object of God's care. A godless philosophy cannot make a godless people—for there is no such thing. No passing philosophy of man can exclude the living God from his creation. Did you hear the extraordinary words of Isaiah? Egypt was a thoroughly corrupt and pagan power. Assyria, in its naked brutality and savage nationalism, was even worse. Yet what does the prophet say? "Whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands." There is no people whom God abandons; and there is no human maneuver on earth, no plan for outer space, that can be totally abstracted from his control.

The church is also neutral in many of the debates that divide a nation. It is not the business of the church, for instance, to tell its members how to vote on the questions that normally divide a democratic society. It is not the business of the church to make up its members' minds for them on such matters of personal conscience as birth control, or the use of alcohol, or what books they read. It is not the business of the church to pontificate about the means that should be used to reach certain desirable ends. It is the church's business, everywhere and always, to be the "blessed third," the voice for God, the embodiment of his gospel. For the "blessed third" in our divided world, the "blessed third" in the midst of our furious debates, the "blessed third" in a family dispute, the "blessed third" who directs our bewildered minds, is none other than the risen Christ. We stand in our confusions like Peter, James, and John on the Mount of Transfiguration. The mists are swirling round and we can just distinguish Moses and Elijah—the law in which we have been trained, the prophets who have spoken to our hearts. "And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone." The business of the church is to make that Jesus known.

There Is No Neutrality

Does this mean, then, that the church is quite neutral on all practical matters, and has nothing to proclaim but a purely spiritual decision, a kind of private salvation? As Paul would say—God forbid! The man or woman who accepts the Lordship of Christ—that means belonging to him, acknowledging him as deliverer and master and Lord—will find that in the fundamental, and therefore most practical, issues of our life he is anything but neutral. When a man asked him to intervene in a family quarrel, "Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me," he refused to be drawn in: "Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?" but he followed up at once with the parable of the rich fool and flung us all up against the decision of whether our lives are to consist in the things we get or the things we give. The choice is God or mammon—and there is no neutrality.

The church, therefore, is not neutral in this area of decision that determines the goals we seek. Nor is the church neutral concerning the

rights and duties of man. The church's neutrality in party politics does not mean that Christians do not care what kind of government they have, or what happens to the liberties that are integral to the Christian view of man. To be "a blessing in the midst of the land" the church must be vigilant against all that threatens the freedom and the true welfare of "even the least of these my brethren." The church is not neutral in the struggle against all that corrupts or degrades the life of a nation.

Nor does the church's universal mission mean that it is indifferent to the outcome of the present world struggle for power. While we can never identify the church with any particular alignment of powers, or any one political philosophy, no neutrality is possible in the major conflict of our day. For this is in the area of faith. It is an ideology—a system of ideas and values totally contrary to the Christian—that seeks the conquest of the world. This is the business of the church, and God forbid that a false sense of neutrality should leave us on the side lines.

Now, surely, as never before, it is the church's task to declare worldwide its belief in God, in the Lordship of Christ, and in the infinite value of all for whom he died. Between that view of man and his destiny, and the Marxist-Leninist there can be no neutrality. Massive military machines may, by the grace of God, be held in mutual check. Differing economies may learn to coexist. But the struggle of ideas goes on, day and night, across all frontiers, and in every medium. And here the church must speak in the name of Christ its Lord, with confidence in him and him alone.

Here, then, is the "blessed third" of which the Bible speaks—a community drawn from all nations, and belonging to none, composed of men and women who differ on a thousand topics, and therefore neutral in many of their passionate disputes, but totally and irrevocably committed to the one who is "the way, the truth, and the life." It is this church that issues its call to the uncommitted. You are not asked to enter a society where all weight of decision will be lifted from your shoulders, and your path mapped out from here to eternity. You will find in it men and women of the most varied opinions and divergent tastes. You will simply hear the claim of the living God who sent his Son to win mankind in the love that passes through suffering to triumph. The sign of that love is an empty cross. And before that cross, with awakened conscience, no one can ever be neutral. It is the great dividing line that drives through mankind. Here is light—and behind it the darkness. Here is love—and behind it the hatred. Here is goodness crucified by evil. Here is God—waiting, waiting for our response. The flicker of faith is enough. In the fellowship of his church it can be fanned into flame. We are not neutral now.

THE CROSS AND RACE

By GEORGE T. PETERS, First Presbyterian Church, Burlingame, California

As they were marching out, they came upon a man of Cyrene, Simon by name; this man they compelled to carry [Jesus'] cross.
—Matthew 27: 32.

Scripture Lesson: **Luke 10: 29-37; I John 4: 7-21**

I

THE crucifixion was moments away. The long, slow, torturous journey to Calvary had begun. The mockery of the trial was over; the crowd had had its sport; there was nothing to do now but finish the business. As the pushing, milling mob went out from the Hall of Judgment a Roman centurion pointed to one of the onlookers and commanded him to carry the huge, heavy cross. The Gospel tells us that the name of the man so selected was Simon, and that he was from Cyrene, a province in North Africa. Christian tradition has long contended that Simon was a black man, either a Negro, or burned so by the desert wind and sun.

But why should it make any difference what the color of his skin? Why should a preacher two thousand years later think it even worth the mentioning? He is supposed to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, that gospel in which, said Paul, "There is neither Jew nor Greek . . .; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Can we, as Christians, lay aside our differences long enough to see ourselves, not as integrationists or segregationists, not as white or black or brown or yellow, but as men for whom Christ died? The Fatherhood of God includes Orval Faubus and Marian Anderson, Senator Eastland and Ralph Bunche, Premier Nehru and Martin Luther King, and you and me. Our trouble is not with the Fatherhood of God, but with the brotherhood of man. And the one is joined to the other inseparably. Therein is our dilemma.

"If any one says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar." That is what the Scripture says. It does not say, "Well, that's human nature." That is what is known, in the idiom of our day, as "laying it on the line!"

And who is my brother? That is the very question the lawyer asked of Jesus, you remember. "Who is my neighbor?" And the answer Jesus gave has burned itself into the conscience of mankind. He did not give a definition—he gave a living illustration. And the incisive truth of the parable of the good Samaritan is in the fact that its hero was a man whom Jesus' hearers detested for the very reason that he was a Samaritan. A Samaritan was dirt to a Jew. You spat upon his shadow. He was some lesser breed. What this says to our rooted prejudices is so plain as not to need explanation. Every man is our brother as God is our Father. We dismiss that at peril to our souls.

II

Whence come these racial prejudices which compromise our Christian faith and set such a tempest raging in the land? Fundamentally they are rooted in collective pride and egotism, in the pervasive human tendency to dislike the different. They are not peculiar to white Americans, as we might suppose. They are part of the root sin of the whole human race. The vaunting pride we exhibit before God has its correspondence in the same pride we exhibit toward one another.

Robert P. Tristram Coffin has given us insight into the irrationality of our prejudices in a poem. In it the men of two mythical kingdoms, Ur and Akkad, tell why they do not like each other. Say the men of Akkad:

> The men of Ur have heads too round.
> They have to build themselves a mound
> To reach their god. Their toes turn in,
> They have no hair upon their chin.
> They are not men. Their women wear
> The finer wool and build their hair
> High as towers in their pride,
> The men go meekly dressed in hide.
> They eat the fat part of their goats,
> Their speech is low down in their throats.
> To them the only proper word
> Is the thin edge of the sword.

Say the men of Ur:

> The men of Akkad have no faces
> Their curled beards are the nesting places
> Of the vermin and the flea.
> They turn their toes out wantonly.
> Their heads are squeezed too long for brains,
> They have to ask their gods for rains.
> They beat their wives, they wear soft clothes,
> Their speech is high and through the nose,
> Their noses are as great as plows,
> They eat the udders of their cows.
> The language that will suit them best
> Is the arrow through the breast.

The poet's conclusion is this:

> Ur and Akkad are dead sands,
> But they have sons in living lands.

—*From* Christian Ethics, *by Georgia Harkness. Abingdon Press, 1957. Used by permission of the author's estate.*

III

Another factor in our racial prejudice is economic insecurity. Many are afraid for their jobs. Most of us know well the vagaries of the economy and the fickleness of employment. Every wage earner is, potentially, a threat to the security and prestige of every other wage earner. He is a particular threat if he is of a different race or nationality—in other words, if he is not "our kind of people." So in our own land there has been the unwritten assumption that if we can keep the 16,000,000 Negroes among us doing the kind of

menial work most of us would not deign to do, we will have lessened the threat to income and security by that much. This is not a pattern peculiar to the South; this concerns the nation.

For example, of the 60,000 homes that were built in Philadelphia between 1953 and 1955, a total of 400 or 7 per cent were available to Negroes. While only 19 per cent of American white families earn less than $2,000 a year, 41 per cent of American Negro families earn less than $2,000 a year. And what is it that we inscribe with pride upon our money? "In God We Trust." Even our money should haunt our conscience. "If any one says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar." Well, maybe we don't hate our brother; if only he would learn to stay in his place. But what if his place and ours is at the foot of the cross? There is no refuge there except in the judgment and the love of God.

The Frantic Up-point

IV

The one final argument of our racial prejudice is always intermarriage. "Do you want your daughter to marry a Negro?" This is the question which is supposed to terminate all further discussion and justify segregation, restrictive covenants in housing, unequal job opportunities, and second-class citizenship.

There are several answers of course. One is that I would hope that my daughter would marry that man with whom she had most in common and with whom she was in love. The second answer can be: "No, frankly, I wouldn't want my daughter to marry a Negro. Marriage is confronted with enough adjustments and hazards without the complication of racial differences and the prejudices of society in which the marriage takes place. I would hope to persuade my daughter of that, and would hope, further, that she would have enough maturity to understand it. But, ultimately, I must assume that the choice is hers." Still another answer is that of a Negro friend of mine, "The Negro would hope to be your brother, not your brother-in-law."

The question, Would you want your daughter to marry a Negro? is an emotionally charged question that begs the point. The point is that a whole race is being penalized, humiliated, and degraded. Our children go to school with other children whom we might not wish them to marry if occasion arose. But because of that we do not attempt to deny to those other children the right of an equal education with our own children, or deny to their fathers an

equal job opportunity, or to their parents a decent place to live.

V

In light of the cross with its judgment and constraining love what must we do about our racial prejudices?

First, we must understand and proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, Lord and Savior. As Christians, it is the gospel that must be the criterion for our attitudes and actions. At the point of our racial prejudices the gospel is unmistakably clear, implicitly and explicitly. Jesus made no distinction between men because of race or color. Any attempt to do so and to attribute it to Jesus—as has been done—is a monstrous distortion of the gospel.

Governor Orval Faubus, of Arkansas, recently accused a group of Presbyterian ministers in Little Rock of having been "brainwashed by left-wingers, Communists, and integrationists." The occasion for the outburst from the governor was a statement urging the integration of the schools in that strife-ridden city. Someone commented that in so saying Mr. Faubus tacitly admitted that the Presbyterians had brains, and that you can't have brains without a backbone. And furthermore, these men had been brainwashed in the sense of which Paul spoke when he wrote, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Little Rock and the world can use more of that kind of brainwashing.

Secondly, the Christian church in America must set its own house in order. And that, of necessity, involves each of us, for we are the church to our generation. Every major Protestant denomination in the country is on record in official pronouncement to this end. The General Assembly of our own church has repeatedly called for a "nonsegregated church and a nonsegregated society" as the only pattern consistent with the gospel. But official pronouncements of the church and the unofficial attitudes of the churches and their members are two different things. Eleven o'clock on Sunday morning has been called the most segregated hour of the week in America. To that charge we have no defense.

Individual church members display much the same attitudes as nonchurch members, reflecting background, emotional bias, and personal prejudice without reference to the gospel. In short, we pick and choose what we will hear and what we will dismiss. We are selective Christians, selecting only those parts of the gospel which suit our preconceived ideas and our ready-made opinions. When the church makes its pronouncements after careful study of Scripture, or when the topic of race is spoken to from the pulpit the reaction of many a churchman is not, Is it true? or, Is it the gospel?, but rather, I don't agree with the church, or, That's what the minister thinks.

The church can set its own house in order only when its laymen are willing to have their own prejudices challenged in love, not by the sermon but by the gospel of Jesus.

We now come to the **third** implication of the cross to our prejudice. As Christians, and as Americans, we must know that our attitudes have world-wide repercussions.

In 1944 the Swedish sociologist Gunnar Myrdal published his monumental study of the race problem in America. He entitled it *The American Dilemma.* Said Myrdal: "If America in actual practice could show the world a progressive trend by which the Negro became finally integrated into modern democracy, all mankind would be given faith again. . . ."

VI

It will not do for us to prate against the godless atheism of communism while the colored peoples of the world bear the crosses we have imposed upon them. We must take up our own cross—the cross of compassion and love and service—if ever the world is to be reconciled.

That is what it is all about you see. "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself," wrote the apostle Paul; "we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God." But how can we be reconciled to God except we repent our pride and prejudice? Said Jesus, "If you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift."

That strikes home! The very act of worship in which we are now engaged—the offering of our substance and ourselves—is meaningful only in terms of our reconciliation with our brethren. If we are to take Jesus seriously, we must know that there are those—men, women, and little children—who do have something against us. Still, the cross is our hope and our salvation, even as it is theirs.

There is a poignant story that may help us to see the cross and ourselves in some new perspective. It is told by Dr. Mordecai Johnson, the famous Negro educator. He had a Negro friend whom he was trying to persuade to unite with the church. Again and again the friend politely demurred until at last he told his story: "When I was a little boy a white evangelist came to our town and began a series of revival meetings in a tent not far from our house. My mother took me to one of the meetings, and we sat in the last row. I was thrilled by the singing and the preaching and the stories of Jesus. I went back again by myself the next night and the next. The preacher said that on Sunday afternoon everyone who believed in Jesus was to come down to the river and be baptized. He said everyone was to wear a white robe. I ran home that night and told my mother that I wanted to be baptized. Poor as we were she took a piece of white cloth and made me my robe. I was the proudest, happiest boy in town that Sunday, a little scared but feeling awfully big. When I got to the river there were a lot of people. I noticed that all of them were white, but I didn't think much about it as I remember. I watched the preacher as he took them one by one down to the river and baptized them in the name of Jesus. He took all of them—men and women, boys and girls—all of them except me. When it was all over I was the only one left standing by the river."

Of what meaning is our baptism in Jesus Christ, if you and I have left even one of our brethren standing by the river?

PROGRAM POINTERS

The proclamation of the good news takes many forms. This issue of SOCIAL PROGRESS affirms the importance of relevant preaching and Christian nurture that equips the members of the Christian community for the encounters and struggles of daily life.

SEA IN THE CURRICULUM

"When Adam Has the Atom" is the provocative program theme for *Crossroads,* January–March, 1960. Program articles probe the church's role in the current crises created by man's release of nuclear energy and what is involved in the survival of mankind. Russell Stevenson, a former chairman of General Assembly's Standing Committee on Social Education and Action, discusses the positions of General Assembly and the National and World Council of Churches on the threat of nuclear war, disarmament, and the control of atomic testing. *The Christian Round Table* presents some current and experimental ways to proclaim the gospel in modern society. Robert Bull's lesson on the church as a subversive element in the world exposes the tensions between the church and culture.

Yes, social education and action issues and interests are firmly embedded in the *Christian Faith and Life* curriculum. All the magazines in the first quarter of the new year carry forward the prophetic materials that our editors develop. Now the urgent question is, Has the social passion of the *Christian Faith and Life* curriculum taken root in the thinking of the teachers in our churches? We hope that all adults who will be teaching children and young people are reading *Crossroads* regularly. After all, *Crossroads* speaks to the social responsibilities of all adults in the churches. We believe that the teachers of children and young people need to be encouraged in their own adult responsibilities in daily life.

We realize that this suggestion may involve still further reading and preparation on the part of teachers and parents of children and young people, but without such nurture teachers are not adequately prepared to handle the prophetic ideas presented in the children's and youth magazines.

We propose that:

→ Social education and action leaders in local churches offer to serve as resource persons in the next round of teachers meetings and gatherings of department superintendents. Issues of SOCIAL PROGRESS round out and bring a current application of the curriculum lessons to teacher preparation. The annual de-

liverances of General Assembly are always printed in full and with a commentary in the July issue of SOCIAL PROGRESS. "United Presbyterians Speak—1958" summarizes social deliverances present and past, and restates the positions of the former Presbyterian Church U.S.A. and the former United Presbyterian Church of North America. "United Presbyterians Speak—1959" brings this up to date with extended commentary on the 1959 pronouncements and supplementary charts and articles showing how pronouncements come to be, and how they guide churches and Presbyterians. We hope Christian education committees and church school superintendents will order copies of these issues of SOCIAL PROGRESS for each of the church school teachers. We suggest that here is basic material for the teaching of the teachers. Teachers need to think about and discuss the existential situation in which people live and into which their teaching is projected. They need to be a part of the continuing analysis of our society and the ways in which the word is relevant to it.

⟶ All teachers of children and young people discuss the *Crossroads* program articles, pages 5-16, with particular attention to the questions appearing on page 11 dealing with the social deliverances of General Assembly and the basic theological assumptions of our church's stand in social matters. For additional homework for the teachers, we wish every church would order copies of SOCIAL PROGRESS (*see back cover*) and make them available to all the teachers:

Beginning with February, 1959, with the new format of SOCIAL PROGRESS, there are some useful study guides, which include substantive material and pertinent discussion questions and procedures. We believe the following issues could be made the basis for a series of teacher meetings:

February, 1959, "The Church and Labor." This issue outlines the history, goals, and problems of organized labor in the United States, subject matter which many Presbyterians do not understand. In the light of the steel strike and its far-reaching effects in the American economy, this topic is very timely.

March, 1959, "This Changing Planet." Here is a study-discussion-action guide on Christian responsibility in international affairs. It deals with the interdenominational co-ordinated emphasis for 1959–1960 on international relations and the church's responsibility for foreign policy.

April, 1959, "Responsible Freedom." Laymen will be especially interested in this issue because of the Calvin jubilee. Church women will discover its relevance to the United Church Women emphasis on Christian freedom. This issue acquaints church officers and leaders with Calvinist theology and polity.

June, 1959, "Evangelism and Social Action." As a joint publication of the Division of Evangelism of the Board of National Missions and the Department of Social Education and Action of the Board of Christian Education, this issue points up the unity of evangelism and social action, and the meaning of salvation. The Hoekendijk article, used with

permission of the World Council of Churches, is particularly pertinent to the ways in which the church serves the world.

→ Under the guidance of the session, church school teachers and social education and action leaders should be assessing the impact of the churches' teaching in the corporate life of the community. We need to find creative ways to measure what we do in terms other than attendance figures and class enrollment.

→ IN THE ADVENT SEASON

More than seven million people (most of them children) in twenty-two countries will no longer receive free powdered milk from Government surpluses. Hundreds of tons have been distributed overseas by voluntary agencies. The available supply today is sufficient only for domestic institutional needs. Our Government and agencies like CROP and other programs of Church World Service have done a wonderful job of getting this nutritious food to the people who need it most.

If children in Hong Kong, Korea, India, and Africa are still to be fed and nurtured back to health, supplies of milk are essential. Campaigns are now needed in this country to raise money to make nonsurplus powdered milk available overseas. We suggest that Christmas giving for church members should include generous gifts to CROP, and Church World Service. The glut of toys and gifts which we call the Christmas exchange is challenged by the continuing world-wide need for food. Children at home and in our church schools can learn a valuable lesson in sharing by having a part in these overseas gifts of compassion. Send contributions to CROP (Christian Rural Overseas Program), 117 West Lexington Avenue, Elkhart, Ind.

Our church members may also contribute to the world's hungry people through the purchase of Christmas greeting cards available from the U.S. Committee for UNICEF. In five official languages of the United Nations greeting cards display the art talents of many countries. The cards are particularly beautiful this year. We hope that all of our churches will be promoting the sending of such greetings. During the next year, UNICEF will aid more than fifty million children and mothers in campaigns against malaria, yaws, tuberculosis, and malnutrition. Write for order form from UNICEF, P. O. Box 22, Church Street Station, New York 8, N.Y.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

In the Churches

Recent TV quiz exposés break open for all to see our close identification with forces that mold and shape the character of the nation. We are pressed to consider what shall be the measure of responsibility as one becomes involved as producers, sponsors, networks, advertisers or as participants in programs or as listeners and viewers.

Believing that a concern for man's relationship to the economic and social order is inherent in the gospel, many churchmen have been speaking to the issue. Notable among those who have been speaking usefully and responsibly is Rev. Lawrence W. McMaster, Jr., Executive Director, Department of Radio and Television, The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Mr. McMaster spells out what to him seems to be the measure of responsibility for broadcasters. The following is an open letter addressed to his associates in the radio and television industry:

If those of us in the television ministry of the church were to stand by as silent observers of the recent TV quiz scandal, we would be guilty of a sin of omission. To be silent at this time would be to compromise our belief in honest broadcasting and the obligation of broadcasters to present the truth. Yet we are placed in an unfortunate position, for this scandal may well end in court and we do not wish to prejudice public opinion against the individuals involved. Let us, therefore, address ourselves to the principles and causes.

Quiz shows are not new, but the big TV quiz shows differed from their more modest radio predecessors mainly in two things —the contestants themselves, and the fact that we could see them. The popularity of these programs was strangely geared to the personality of the men and women who competed on them. Several men and women had fame thrust upon them. It was instantaneous; the American people took them to their hearts. These people were the eggheads, charming and educated. The athletes, cops, and cowboys gave way to higher education. Millions of American boys and girls were brought face to face with a new image, a new hero: the intellectual.

Most of these men and women were highly educated, well employed, adult, mature, civilized, and decidedly charming human beings, and they quickly established themselves as heroes of a sort, standing in their isolation booths alone, pitting their brains against the next question, much the same way the pitcher stands alone on his mound and faces the batting order of the opposing team. The contestants were induced to play a game, but the only criterion of right and wrong was last night's rating. All was geared to this; next week's question, next week's contestant—everything, including ethics, morality, and honor, was sacrificed for the rating. The one thing the show had to be was popular. Morality and truth were completely sacrificed to popularity.

To the men who are charged with the responsibility of buying, selling, producing, and otherwise controlling the programing that is seen in America, we have this to say: you must examine your responsibility to the people. Your prime responsibility is not to the sponsor, nor to the network, but to the people. The air is legally and rightfully theirs; you have franchise only. This applies to all types of programs. By making popularity the main criterion you have actually broken faith with the people.

Popularity is not only no criterion of quality; it is also not a method of discerning between good and evil. By deifying popularity you have permitted yourselves to be led so far from integrity that you drag the innocent with you and subvert in one week of exposure several years of image-building. Now the intellectual heroes of American youth are suspect, and you have relegated them to the level of fight-fixers, influence peddlers, racketeers.

This is a sharp example of relegating moral standards to complete relativism, a dangerous disservice to the American people. This makes it possible for truth and right to become whatever powerful organs or influence peddlers say they are. We urge you to re-evaluate constantly, as we must, the criteria for programing in the clear light of basic principles. For us, these principles are the result of being confronted by the ringing honesty of the prophets of the Old Testament and the scorching honesty of Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Gospels.

We do not advocate censorship, as some will. Rather, we join with those in the industry who are applying the highest standards of honesty and are earnestly trying to present life truthfully to the public.

Experimental economic workshops for clergy, sponsored by Purdue University, have proved so successful that the program will be expanded gradually into national scale. For the purpose, The Clergy Economic Education Foundation has been incorporated as a nonprofit organization in the State of Indiana. With its headquarters on the Purdue University campus, its program will be to establish an Economic Workshop for Clergy in each of three additional states annually under the sponsorship of its respective state university.

The pilot workshops held during the past three summers brought together some sixty clergymen each summer for a comprehensive course in industrial economics, covering a broad range of topics, from banking to industrial relations and from credit to international trade. The lectures have been given by a staff of professors from Purdue, Michigan, and Fordham universities, and from Albion and Wabash colleges, as well as by visiting speakers from business, farm, and labor organizations.

Should the Defense Treaty between Japan and the U.S.A. be revised? This is a question being discussed in Japan as a result of a projected revision of the treaty by the Government. Taking the lead in guiding Japanese churchmen to a responsible position is the Kyodan (United Church of Christ in Japan) Social Action Committee, led by Kazuo Nomoto.

In the first of a series of three discussions held at Ginza Church, Tokyo, Socialist Kanju Kato, as a member of the Japanese Diet, presented this position: "The reason for the Government's desire to revise the treaty is because of the United Nations charter. American troops within Japan do not have the responsibility to defend Japan. From the standpoint of Japan's responsibility for defending itself, it is said that the reason for peace is the balance of power between the Western and Communist blocs, but it seems, rather, that the actual reason is the desire of each nation for peace. This is evident in the three incidents—Korea, Berlin, and Taiwan—any one of which could have been but did not develop into the fuse that lighted a war. Japan has discarded arms under its new constitution and cannot

sign a defense treaty without violating it; and such a treaty seems unnecessary in the light of the real reason for the maintenance of world peace."

Mr. Kato reviewed the American occupation policy toward Japan by saying that there were three stages: "democratize Japan; re-establish economic stability; and strengthen American armed might." He continued by stating "in case the treaty is revised, the Japanese self-defense force must co-operate with American troops and must follow their direction. If the American forces make any movement from Japan, the Japanese forces could be sent overseas; as a mutual defense treaty there could be no withdrawal from the commitment."

The Socialist Party opposes revision at present, urging rather close observation of the international situation with clearer definition of individual self-defense.

The second meeting to be held under the auspices of the Kyodan Social Action Committee will present a prominent Liberal Democrat Party member, Tokuji Tokonami (invited), and the third will be addressed by Dr. Nobunari Ukai, of Tokyo University.

A new program in practical politics to supplement traditional courses in political science has been initiated by Bethany College (Disciples of Christ).

The program developed out of an awareness that the rapid increase in the size and function of government in America demands more political understanding, skill, and participation by each citizen.

This new approach to education for responsible citizenship includes: (*a*) a lecture each week to the entire student body, (*b*) seminars for advanced students, (*c*) an annual two-day workshop in politics, and (*d*) a program in training for active citizenship. The latter will be accomplished through a series of summer internships in practical politics and administration which will send a selected group of students to the offices of party headquarters, legislators, various administrative offices, and legislative reference bureaus for a period of eight weeks during the summer.

The program will enable the college to also expand its field trips to state capitals and municipalities in such a way as to make it possible for a large number of students to make supervised visits. Many students will likewise be enabled to visit the national capital each year for an intensive review of American government in action.

Protestantism, as represented by the National Council of Churches, speaks with a united voice to many crucial social issues of our day. The General Board of NCC has published all of the NCC pronouncements in an 8½″ x 11″ format punched to fit a three-ring loose-leaf container. Single copies are available on request from the Office of Publication and Distribution, 475 Riverside Drive, New York 27, N.Y.

In the UN

Pointing up the gravity of the situation in Laos and emphasizing his high concept of the responsibilities of his office, UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld was on a personal mission to that country, at press time. The trip was undertaken after an inconclusive report by a Security Council Subcommittee, and over Soviet objections, which many observers feel were partly generated by a desire to satisfy their Red China ally. It is fully recognized that Western prestige in all of Asia will be seriously damaged if some means cannot be found to protect this little country from Communist indirect aggression.

In mid-November the issue of the **Palestinian** refugees was again before the General Assembly. After considerable controversy it is expected that the Assembly will vote to continue assistance to the refugees through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency and extend the life of that agency. There are about one million of these refugees, and the number is growing. Half of them are children under sixteen.

In response to **France's** official announcement that it expected to detonate an atomic bomb in the Sahara desert early in 1960, the Afro-Asian bloc introduced a resolution calling upon France to "refrain from such tests." As we go to press, the General Assembly's Political Committee has voted for the resolution 46–26, with 10 abstentions. Since the vote was short of the necessary two-thirds majority for Assembly adoption, the final fate of the resolution is uncertain at this time.

Ireland has introduced a draft resolution proposing that the United Nations act to prevent countries not now having nuclear weapons from manufacturing them or otherwise acquiring them. The resolution calls on the General Assembly to recommend to the ten-power East-West Disarmament Conference, scheduled to meet early in 1960, a study of means to prevent "the wider dissemination of nuclear arms."

The Special Political Committee has concluded debate on the race question in **South Africa,** at this writing. A draft resolution denounces racial segregation in South Africa as contrary to the United Nations Charter and deplores the Government's apartheid policy of legal discrimination between whites and nonwhites. The resolution was adopted 67–3, with 7 abstentions. The General Assembly is expected to endorse the committee recommendation by an equally impressive majority. Those abstaining or opposing indicated their opposition to racial discrimination, but said their objections were based on the belief that this matter was outside the jurisdiction of the United Nations because it was an "internal" affair.

Soviet Russia is preparing a resolution calling for an international conference for the exchange of information on outer space, as we go to press. It is expected that the United States will support the resolution with, perhaps, an effort to have the conference expanded to include a study of international controls in the use of outer space.

About Books

Free Society and Moral Crisis, by Robert Cooley Angell. University of Michigan Press, 1958. 252 pp. with index. $6.00.

This remarkable book by a leading American sociologist is concerned with ways of overcoming the moral hazards inherent in a rapidly changing technical society. In the Foreword, Reinhold Niebuhr says, "That Angell is studying not merely social integration but also moral discipline becomes apparent when he traces the social sources of individual discipline, and gives his diagnosis of individual and group 'deviants' and particularly of child delinquents." Dr. Niebuhr acclaims the book as "a precious resource both to the general reader and to the specialist who are concerned with the problems of social and moral integration."

Five Ideas That Changed the World, by Barbara Ward. W. W. Norton & Company, 1959. 188 pp. $3.75.

This book by Barbara Ward, one of the most influential writers and speakers today on politics and international affairs in the English-speaking world, is based on five lectures at the University College of Ghana. Her book is an examination of the real center of power in the world today—the nation-state. She traces the history of the theory and practice of nationalism, reveals its potentialities for good and evil, and shows how it changes and is changed by four other basic ideas. These four are industrialism, colonialism, communism, and internationalism, and they are here analyzed in their impact on the East, on the West, and on the uncommitted nations of Asia and Africa. In conclusion Miss Ward suggests an essential for human survival—that the Communist powers abandon their picture of world order (exclusively Communist and controlled from Moscow) and that the Western powers acquire one (in terms of a sense of world-wide community and responsibility shared with all mankind). This is another *must* book for churchmen, in and out of the pulpit, who are concerned about international affairs.

Point Four Assignment: Stories from the Records of Those Who Work in Foreign Fields for the Mutual Security of Free Nations, by Russell Davis and Brent Ashabranner. Little, Brown & Co., 1959. 246 pp. with index. $3.50.

In this book a statistician and an educator who have undertaken Point Four assignments present fifteen true accounts of the variety of national security programs that are representative of the work being done in sixty countries around the world by Americans under various United States foreign-aid programs.

The stories have to do with far places with strange-sounding names—Kirkuk, Madhya Pradesh, Katmandu, Na Ngoo, Altiplano, Shankilla. The adventurous stories range from rat exterminators in Iraq to rice farmers in India to cabbage raisers in Iran to educators in Africa to diesel engineers at the Khyber Pass, and it adds up to a lot of suspenseful reading. More important, the book contains an amazing amount of information about the much-publicized subject. Reading it will give one new confidence in this country and in people everywhere.

Congress and the American Tradition, by James Burnham. Henry Regnery Company, 1959. 363 pp. with index. $6.50.

This important book on political philosophy, written under a grant from the Foundation for Foreign Affairs by the influential author of *The Managerial Revolution,* discusses the central place of Congress in the American political tradition, the decline of its power and prestige during the present century, and the possibilities of restoring its influence. Mr. Burnham insists that if the Congress ceases to be an actively functioning political institution, "then political liberty in the United States will soon come to an end." Part I of the book provides a classic exposition of the original principles of the American Government. Part II is a discussion and assessment of the present position of Congress. Part III is a realistic evaluation of the future of the American Congress. Mr. Burnham steers a middle road between wishful thinking and prophecies of doom. His presentation is clear and calm. "The choice of liberty," he says, "made for us at the nation's beginning by the Founding Fathers, is now up for review, on the national as on the world arena. Is it really true that man can learn the value of liberty only by losing it?"

The Way Things Are, by P. W. Bridgman. Harvard University Press, 1959. 333 pp. with index. $5.75.

This stirring book is described as "an individual assessment of the nature of experience and the world as man knows it." The author, a Nobel Prize-winning physicist and Harvard professor emeritus, begins by observing that man cannot get away from himself. Professor Bridgman pursues the implications of this fact to their final, unsettling consequences in the sciences and in human relations. Man's failure to admit that everyone describes the world from himself as center, and that he cannot get away from himself, has led him to dangerous attitudes toward his fellows. The discussion ranges widely over the sciences and concludes with examples of man's social frustrations in various fields in which he has established standards. This is an unconventional, original, awakening book.

Look Southward, Uncle: A New Look at the Other 175,000,000 Americans, by Edward Tomlinson. The Devin-Adair Company, 1959. 380 pp. with index. $6.00.

This book by a distinguished journalist who is regarded as the dean of

correspondence on Western Hemisphere affairs, seeks to interpret to North Americans the whole vast world that extends from the Rio Grande to the southernmost tip of South America. The author points out why that world is important to the United States, in every department of human activity, and why the United States is important to the twenty Latin-American republics. He discusses what is happening in the "other Americas," the problems of inter-American relations, and concludes with the fascinating chapter on tips for travelers through Latin America. This is the most complete up-to-date book in the field and is full of eye-opening facts. It is required reading for students, for businessmen, for travelers, for churchmen, who are interested in Western Hemispheric affairs.

Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the United States, by Eleanor Flexner. Harvard University Press, 1959. 384 pp. with index. $6.00.

This is the first full account of the woman's rights movement in the U.S. The account combines careful scholarship with a vivid sense of the drama of the hundred years of effort that won for the women of this country equal opportunity for education, for jobs, and for the vote. It pays tribute to the women whose leadership made possible what we today take for granted as ordinary democratic rights, and to the countless men who shared the belief that women should be given the chance to develop their capacities and to participate fully in our way of life. The book covers relatively well-known episodes and many which are not so familiar. It touches on the struggles of women factory workers to organize unions, the work of the newly emancipated Negro women to build their own organizations, and the series of advances that led to the establishing of the great women's colleges. The long struggle for the right to vote is traced from its earliest stages at the close of the Civil War through the first victory in Wyoming, under the amazing Esther Morris, through the grueling campaigns to win woman suffrage on a state-by-state basis, to the passage of the woman's suffrage amendment in 1920. Miss Flexner has backed her book with careful research, and the text is carefully documented. This is a basic book dealing with a very important phase of America's political and cultural development.

Escape to Utopia: The Communal Movement in America, by Everett Webber. Hastings House Publishers, 1959. 444 pp. with index. $5.50.

A fascinating aspect of American history is the story of the experimental communes that sprang up all over the country in the late 1700's and throughout the nineteenth century. These utopian schemes stirred the American public to passionate interest and heated disapproval. Religious or secular, the prophets of each commune had the basic idea of pooling labor and goods. They also had in common a blithe disregard for the facts of human nature. Mr. Webber recounts here with good humor and understanding the pitfalls that beset

these creators of a strange social phenomenon. The principal and final insurmountable difficulties faced by the communal movement had to do with sex and economics. *Escape to Utopia* is the result of many years of research in the art and surprising byways of American history. It is useful and readable, and we dare to suggest that it is full of illustrative material for sermons.

Out of Our Past: The Forces That Shaped Modern America, by Carl N. Degler. Harper & Brothers, 1959. 484 pp. with index. $6.00.

This is not only a brilliant description of the tides of American history and of the varied persons who affected them, but a revelation of meanings and ideas throw unexpected light on the present. The author, Assistant Professor of History at Vassar, states his purpose as seeking an answer to the question, How did Americans get to be the way they are in the middle of the twentieth century? He looks at 350 years of American history through the lens of the present. This means that he deals with only the events and forces in the past that have contemporary significance. The book is a vivid historical narrative illuminating the origins of our modern way of life.

A History of Western Morals, by Crane Brinton. Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., 1959. 502 pp. with index. $7.50.

Dr. Brinton, Professor of History at Harvard, presents here a scholarly and comprehensive review of moral thought in the Western world. He discusses the origin of Western morals in the ancient Near East, in the Greco-Roman world, in the Judaeo-Christian tradition, and the development in the Middle Ages and through the Reformation and Renaissance, through the seventeenth century and the Age of Reason, and through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to the present time.

Dr. Brinton has drawn on an impressive range of knowledge of the Western man—his human relationships, his business practices, his politics, his religion. He considers each important Western society and analyzes its conduct. He searches human history for the meaning of ethics. *A History of Western Morals* arrives at some controversial conclusions about the value of religion, the practices of sex, the nature of crime, the possibility of progress. It is an extremely important book, urbane and penetrating, destined to stand among the classical surveys of Western civilization.

Dear Sir:

SOCIAL PROGRESS is so good that I never put aside an issue without feelings of guilt at my not doing more to use it with groups or even to disseminate it. Having read the Mills and Shinn articles [October, 1959] and remembering similarly excellent past issues, I feel that we must make even a modest number available to our people. Will you please, therefore, begin a group subscription for ten copies to start immediately?

—Fred P. Knieriem
Dobbs Ferry, New York

Dear Sir:

Since leaving my pastorate at the First Presbyterian Church of Princeton, Indiana, a little more than a year ago, I have missed receiving SOCIAL PROGRESS. It was not until a copy of the issue for July, 1959, was sent to me a few days ago that I had opportunity to read an official account of the recent action by the General Assembly in regard to the question of unionism.

As seems to be indicated by the debate which I understand took place at the General Assembly, not all Presbyterians are in accord with the position taken. I, for one, have been particularly disturbed by what I feel to be inadequate thinking through of the problem by those responsible for the resolution. Almost three years ago, while still pastor of my church in Indiana, I began to make a careful study of the question. It was, as a matter of fact, because of the thinking I had developed as pastor of my church in this and related areas that I was invited to assume my new position as editor of the journal *Faith and Freedom.*

I am aware that your committee has been critical of Spiritual Mobilization in times past, having read the issue of SOCIAL PROGRESS of a few years ago in which our organization was equated with a number of other groups regarded as excessively right-wing. I have tried earnestly and conscientiously to redeem Spiritual Mobilization from association with irresponsible extremists, though I am well aware that a number of people still disagree with the general position that we take. I strongly feel that as responsible and thoroughly Christian a case can be made for a generally conservative point of view in social matters as is claimed for more liberal points of view.

In any case, I undertook last fall to subject the right-to-work issue to careful analysis from a Christian point of view, and had it published in a booklet entitled *The Rightness of the Right to Work.* If Presbyterians are to be given a well-rounded approach to the problem, some of the considerations contained in my booklet [should] be provided along with the considerations contained in the July issue of SOCIAL PROGRESS.

I am sure that, in fairness, you do not want your committee to submit to Presbyterian opinion only one side of the debate. . . . I recall a statement in SOCIAL PROGRESS by

Marshall Scott some time ago which likewise purported to present both sides. I regret to say that my personal judgment is that the side of those who support right to work has not been adequately presented in either of these two cases cited. I have yet to see in most of our religious journals a presentation of the case for right to work by someone whose conclusion favors it.

—Edward W. Greenfield
Spiritual Mobilization
San Jacinto, California

(*Ed. Note:* The booklet referred to by Mr. Greenfield was a part of the material studied by the committee that *initiated* the right-to-work statement of the 171st General Assembly. Readers of SOCIAL PROGRESS may secure the booklet for 10 cents by writing to the above address.)

Dear Sir:

As an old SEA man and a graduate of PIIR [Presbyterian Institute of Industrial Relations], I got a lot of help out of "The History Makers," by C. Wright Mills, in the October issue. Please send me four copies of it.

I have been thinking along these lines for years but needed to have it said in these very plain, incisive words. Our SOCIAL PROGRESS is the most thought-provoking magazine I receive. Power to you!

—K. Logan Barnes
San Clemente, California

Dear Sir:

C. Wright Mills's "The History Makers," in the October issue of SOCIAL PROGRESS, reads like a first-rate commentary on a key and difficult Scripture passage. It is clear and relevant. But that which Mr. Mills shows the "Fourth Epoch" to be in our country is not very complimentary to our Government, our military, our corporations, our education, or our church.

But thank God SOCIAL PROGRESS is not based on compliments. By reading this article once a month for a year, we might become concerned enough to meet the disturbing issues that Mr. Mills presents.

Signed (as one who does not wish to become a cheerful robot)

—Donald E. Calhoun
Mount Perry, Ohio

Dear Sir:

I commend SOCIAL PROGRESS for presenting such thought-provoking and needed articles as "The History Makers" and "The Affair Between Church and Culture." It is frightening to learn how much the church has been caught up into the "American way and culture." May we in the presbyteries not hesitate to speak against such strange courses for "our ship" and once again find our "bigness" only in Christ Jesus.

—George L. Gallaher
Mechanicsville, Iowa

Dear Sir:

The fact that you can get a person of the stature of C. Wright Mills to write on "The History Makers" means that you are giving us insight that all of us need. You deserve the highest praise.

—C. Marshall Muir
East Orange, New Jersey

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